



Building Gender Equity in the Workplace

A Best Practices Resource Guide

August 2016

Project Lead Partners



About This Guide

This *Building Gender Equity in the Workplace* best practices resource guide is a project of the Gender Equity Committee of the Bay Area Council, in partnership with The Representation Project and numerous other regional sponsors. It was produced by the Bay Area Council Economic Institute in print and PDF formats accompanied by a web landing page at <http://www.bayareaeconomy.org/gender>

Women are half the workforce and half the population in the United States. As a society, we must work not only to create opportunities for women to succeed, but to ensure that they are fairly rewarded for their hard work and success. This practical guide identifies six key elements that contribute to gender inequality, and provides impactful strategies for employers to enhance gender equity in their workplaces.

About the Institute

Since 1990, the Bay Area Council Economic Institute has been the leading think tank focused on the economic and policy issues facing the San Francisco/Silicon Valley Bay Area, one of the most dynamic regions in the United States and the world's leading center for technology and innovation. A valued forum for stakeholder engagement and a respected source of information and fact-based analysis, the Institute is a trusted partner and adviser to both business leaders and government officials. Through its economic and policy research and its many partnerships, the Institute addresses major factors impacting the competitiveness, economic development and quality of life of the region and the state, including infrastructure, globalization, science and technology, and health policy. It is guided by a Board of Trustees drawn from influential leaders in the corporate, academic, non-profit, and government sectors. The Institute is housed at and supported by the Bay Area Council, a public policy organization that includes hundreds of the region's largest employers and is committed to keeping the Bay Area the world's most competitive economy and best place to live. The Institute also supports and manages the Bay Area Science and Innovation Consortium (BASIC), a partnership of Northern California's leading scientific research laboratories and thinkers.

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About the Bay Area Council's Gender Equity Committee

The Bay Area Council recognizes that a strong, innovative, and competitive community is only possible when we tap into the full talent of the workforce. The Bay Area Council's Gender Equity Committee is chaired by Peg McAllister, Senior Vice President in the San Francisco Bay Area region of Lee Hecht Harrison; Stuart Newton, Business Development Executive at Deloitte; and Christopher Ruhl, Principal in PwC's Forensic Services practice. The chairs work directly with the Bay Area Council's gender equity team led by Linda Bidrossian, Senior Vice President, Public Policy, and Emily Loper, Policy Manager. Together the committee works to inspire Bay Area companies to improve their economic vitality by implementing equitable practices.

About The Representation Project

Jennifer Siebel Newsom's first film *Miss Representation* premiered at the 2011 Sundance Film Festival and exposed the ways in which mainstream media and culture contribute to the underrepresentation of women in positions of power and influence. In response to overwhelming public demand for ongoing education and social action in support of the film's message, Newsom founded the organization that has become The Representation Project in April 2011. Using film as a catalyst for cultural transformation, The Representation Project inspires individuals and communities to challenge and overcome limiting stereotypes so that everyone, regardless of gender, race, class, age, sexual orientation, or circumstance, can fulfill their human potential.

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Building Gender Equity in the Workplace

A Best Practices Resource Guide

Gender equity in the workplace has been a focus of concern for at least a decade, but is receiving increased attention today due to the slow rate of progress. This is particularly the case in the Bay Area, where debate is growing on the underrepresentation of women in tech. As a result, many of the region's business leaders are making gender equity a priority. To support those efforts, this guide provides businesses with a portfolio of references and best practices for how this challenge can be addressed.

Success in this area can address not just equity concerns, but also the bottom line. The McKinsey Global Institute, for example, estimates that women's full participation in the workforce in identical circumstances to men would add \$2.1 trillion to the US economy.¹

How are we doing? Participation by women in the workforce has grown to 56.8% in 2015 (compared to 68.6% for men), a significant increase from just 43.9% (compared to 80% for men) in 1970.² Despite this progress, wage inequality persists. The Income and Poverty in the United States report compiled by the US Census Bureau finds that in 2014 full-time female employees made only 79% as much in wages as men—a 21% gap.³ While that gap has shrunk since the 1970s—when the difference in men's and women's wages was over 39%—progress in recent years has been scant. And we're still a long way from parity: an analysis by the Institute for Women's Policy Research estimates that the wage gap will be closed by 2058, very far in the future and beyond many women's lifetimes.⁴

The issue extends beyond pay, and is also reflected in business structures. For example, a 2014 study by Catalyst found that women held only 19.2% of all S&P 500 board seats in the United States.⁵ A UC Davis

Graduate School of Management study using 2014–2015 data on the 400 largest public companies headquartered in California found that of the 3,340 board director seats in those companies, women were holding only 12.4% (403 seats) while men were holding 87.6% (2,837 seats). The Davis study also found that of the 1,868 highest paid executive positions in those companies, 9.9% were being held by women compared to 90.1% being held by men. Percentages were only slightly better for the 220 Bay Area companies in the data sample, with women holding 13.1% of the board director seats and 10.8% of the highest paid executive positions.⁶

Taken together, these gaps represent lost opportunity for women, for the companies where they are employed, and for the economy.

Legislation at the federal (Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act of 2009), state (California Fair Pay Act of 2015), and local levels (San Francisco's Paid Parental Leave Ordinance, which takes effect in January 2017) aims to redress this imbalance. Businesses are also stepping up to accelerate change internally. Bay Area companies are among the leaders in this effort.

Building on their experience, the guide that follows is a resource for companies that are considering their own initiatives to advance gender equity in the workplace. It discusses six goals relating to important workplace challenges, frames the issues, and recommends actions to address them. It also provides links to supportive resources and case studies of what specific companies are doing. Every company and workforce environment is unique. We believe, however, that companies that choose to adopt these strategies will have healthier workforce environments that are more attractive to talent and in the long run will be stronger and more competitive.

1

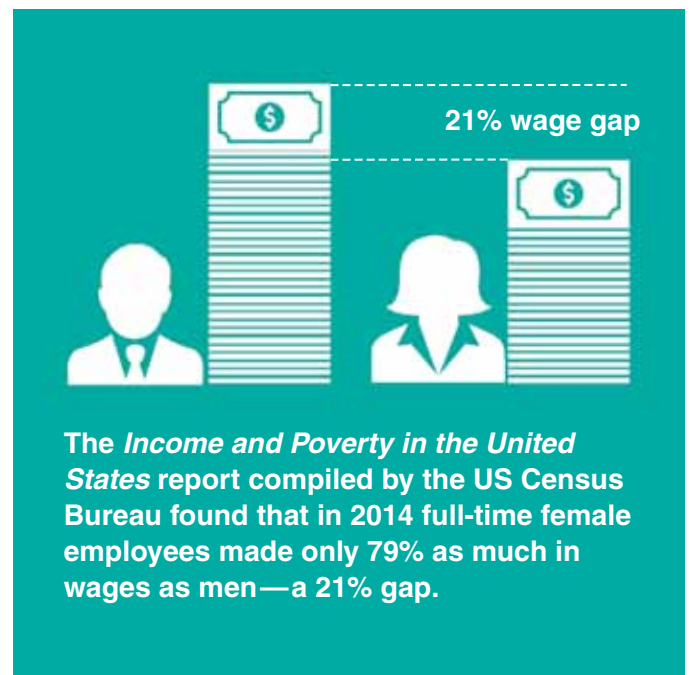
Closing the Wage Gap— Equal Pay for Equal Work

Laws that seek to eliminate wage discrimination on the basis of gender have been in place for more than 50 years, since the passage of the Equal Pay Act of 1963. More recently, the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act of 2009 was enacted to help reduce pay disparities between men and women by giving employees better opportunities to pursue remedies for paycheck discrimination under federal antidiscrimination laws.

Despite these equal pay laws, the wage gap persists. According to data from the US Census Bureau collected in 2014, median earnings for women employed full time were 79% of median earnings for men. This gap can be partly explained by differences in education, years of experience, and the disproportionately high share of women employed in lower-wage occupations, such as nursing, teaching, and human resources administration. However, a wage gap exists in these occupations as well, with men earning 1–2% more than their female counterparts.⁷

The wage gap also becomes more apparent when analyzing specific industries, as male-dominated occupations show the greatest variation in earnings by gender. For example, a UC Davis Graduate School of Management study found that women in the high-paying professional services sector (including computer, mathematical, architecture, life and physical sciences,

and social sciences professions) were paid 71.7% of men's median earnings in 2015.⁸ In a similar study in which earnings were adjusted for differences in gender employment patterns, Cornell University researchers found that the median earnings ratio rose to nearly 92%.⁹ The eight-percent gap may partly stem from discrimination, but is more likely a result of workplace policies and practices that sort women into lower-paying roles.



Strategic Action Items

Conduct regular compensation analyses to identify wage gaps.

Compensation analyses give decision makers information needed to identify any pay discrepancies among employees. Employers should analyze current wage data internally to determine whether a wage gap exists between women and men. If a gap exists, companies can devote funds to raising wages for employees affected by wage inequity.

In 2013, Cisco Systems, Inc. created a department to continuously evaluate employee salaries in order to ensure that employees are paid fairly. While Cisco did not have a large gender wage gap, as a result of the compensation analysis the corporation adjusted its employees' pay.

Putting in place tactics and policies that promote the continuous examination of salaries ensures that men and women receive fair wages. Employees who perform the same tasks and have the same skills should be paid equally, regardless of their gender.

Encourage women to negotiate their salaries.

Women are 11% less likely to negotiate their salaries when starting a job than men, and when they do, the outcomes are more favorable for men.¹⁰ Additionally, men are four times more likely than women to ask for a raise.¹¹ This generates a wage gap, as men are able to achieve higher initial salaries and subsequent raises. The characteristics connected with negotiating are usually associated with masculine behavior, increasing women's reluctance to negotiate. When women know that salary negotiations are expected and encouraged, they may be more willing to engage their employers in discussions about salary increases.

If a company wishes to allow salary negotiations, it is important to have transparent and clear dialogues that signal to women that their engagement in those types of conversations is not taboo or seen as undesirable. Additionally, changing your company's workplace culture to one that is inclusive can help women overcome any perceived limitations because of their gender.

Do not ask for salary history.

Reliance on salary history leads employers to compound previous biases and disadvantages that have negatively affected employees' salaries. Women who have been underpaid in previous jobs tend to be offered wages that perpetuate the wage gap between them and their male counterparts. Utilizing reliable market information, employers need to set base salaries for positions when they are advertised to potential candidates.

Maintain transparent wage records.

In a study of the compensation practices of 7,600 companies of varied sizes across multiple industry sectors, PayScale reported that in 2015 only 21% of employees believed their companies were transparent about wages compared to 40% of employers. This mismatch between employers and employees in perception of compensation practices is concerning, and pay transparency practices are key to making employees feel valued. Eighty-two percent of employees reported that they would be satisfied with below-market pay if their employer was transparent about the reason.¹²

Maintaining transparent compensation practices does not mean that employers should make information on individual employee wages publicly available. Transparency procedures simply encourage employers

to give their employees an understanding of the company's compensation strategies and practices. This includes allowing employees to understand how raises are earned and what sources the company utilizes to determine wage ranges.

Know your markets and how much skills are worth.

The PayScale 2016 Compensation Best Practices Report revealed that while 73% of employers believe their employees are being paid fairly, only 36% of employees feel they are paid fairly.¹³ The same report concluded that the top reason employees voluntarily leave their companies is "seeking higher pay offer elsewhere." In order to retain talent, employers should evaluate compensation data in order to know how much skills are worth in the market and to designate their employee's wages.

"The biggest obstacle to closing the pay gap is our society's culture. I think we need to have a social dialogue; if you really think about it, we've only really been in this place, where women have been half of the workforce, for less than 50 years. For millennia before that, the world was a very different place. It takes time for us, as a culture, to catch up to where we've come because of legislation and because of real movement in diversity efforts. I think if we focus on that, and have a social dialogue about what expectations are for women, versus what they are for men, and make it acceptable for women to be doing the things that men are doing, and vice versa, we're going to start seeing some real change."

– Lauri Damrell, Partner, Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe LLP, Sacramento Office and Commissioner, California Commission on the Status of Women and Girls

Tools

PayScale Cloud Compensation Software – The PayScale Benchmark and PayScale Insight cloud compensation software applications available at <http://www.payscale.com/> give employers access to detailed market data, including average compensation by job title and skills. The software also tracks current employees' pay increase cycles to help employers determine how and when salary increases are due. The PayScale Insight tool includes the Gender Pay Comparison feature, developed to allow employers to easily see pay discrepancies between women and men.

(www.payscale.com/hr?src=hp_2_paybutton)

Glassdoor – Glassdoor is a jobs and recruiting database that collects salary reports, company reviews, CEO approval ratings and more. The salary reports allow employers and employees to view salary ranges and averages by company and job titles.

(www.glassdoor.com)

How To Build Pay Grades and Salary Ranges – In this short guide, PayScale presents steps to building pay grades and salary ranges in organizations in order to ensure fair and equal pay to employees.

(<http://resources.payscale.com/rs/payscale/images/2013-How-to-Build-Pay-Grades-and-Salary-Ranges.pdf>)

5 Easy Steps to a Smart Compensation Plan – In this step-by-step guide by PayScale, employers are led through key strategies to complete a thorough compensation planning process.

(<http://resources.payscale.com/hr-whitepaper-smart-compensation-planning.html>)

Negotiation – In this Lean In video, Margaret A. Neale, Professor of Management at the Stanford Graduate School of Business and Co-director of the Executive Program for Women Leaders, discusses ways in which women can improve their negotiation skills. Lean In's accompanying discussion guide also offers questions that address the themes and ideas in the video.

(<http://leanin.org/education/negotiation/>)

Compensation Analysis and Review System (CARS) –

This Mercer online rewards tool allows employers to analyze pay levels to assess competitiveness by market, region and industry. The tool has multiple features that facilitate reports on data collected.

(<https://www.imercer.com/products/2014/compensation-review-analysis-service.aspx>)

Learn More

Should HR Ask for Job Candidates' Salary Histories? –

This Society for Human Resource Management article explains that while asking for salary history gives employers an upfront understanding of a job candidate's potential compensation expectations, it hurts profits and diversity efforts.

(<https://www.shrm.org/hr-today/news/hr-magazine/0416/pages/should-hr-ask-for-job-candidates-salary-histories.aspx>)

Company Spotlight: Gap, Inc.

Founded in 1969 by Doris and Donald Fisher, Gap Inc. has put women in leadership positions since it began, and its experience has shown that female leaders contribute to decision making processes and to influencing policies that positively affect other women in the company. In 2014, Gap became the first Fortune 500 company to announce that it pays men and women equally for equal work worldwide.

As part of its Pay Equity by Gender Project initiated in honor of its 45th year in business, Gap had an internal analysis performed to determine if there were inequalities in pay between men and women anywhere throughout the company. As a second part of the process, it then had the findings statistically validated by Exponential Talent, an independent consulting firm that specialized in gender and diversity issues. When full-time and part-time employee salaries were adjusted for variables such as experience and then examined by gender, no statistically significant difference was found.

Part of Gap's wage equity success has been attributed to its established system that clearly defines job titles and pay grades so that any disparities are more easily discovered. Traditional performance reviews, which tend to be more subjective, have also been replaced with an "evidence-based performance management system" that is based on clear performance metrics.

Gap has committed to using ongoing data analysis to ensure that its equal pay for equal work continues. It keeps money set aside to reward good performance, and if any disparities exist, it can tap into that pool to make salary adjustments.

2

Reducing Unconscious Bias

At any given time, the human mind is taking in millions of observations, but it can only process a handful of them before making a decision. To avoid being overwhelmed and to make decisions in a reasonable amount of time, our minds create shortcuts that we are unaware of, based on previous experiences, preferences, and assumptions. Known academically as “unconscious bias,” these shortcuts may be unintentional perceptions and beliefs about things and people formed by stereotypes inherited through socialization.

In the workplace, unconscious bias is expressed through automatic categorizing of skills and roles based on employees’ gender, race, and other physical attributes. Gender stereotypes can work against women in the workplace, and they often result in women being overlooked for technical and leadership positions or simply being paid less.

An example is provided by a 2012 randomized double-blind study in which Yale researchers asked scientists from research universities to rate a student’s application materials for a laboratory manager position. Half the scientists received the application with a male name attached, and the other half received the exact same application with a female name attached. Results showed that the “female applicants” were rated significantly lower than the “male applicants” and that both male and female scientists rated the “female applicants” lower.¹⁴

Research has also shown that traits traditionally seen as masculine are often also associated with leadership, despite evidence that men are no more effective in leadership positions than women.¹⁵ This stereotype probably evolved from men holding the majority of leadership positions in society for so long, and it has now become self-fulfilling, preventing women from moving into high-ranking positions and showing their value. However, unconscious bias can be effectively mitigated in the workplace through a combination of education and policy changes.



Unconscious biases are unintentional perceptions and beliefs about things and people formed by stereotypes inherited through socialization. In the workplace, unconscious bias is expressed through automatic categorizing of skills and roles based on employees’ gender, race, and other physical attributes.

Strategic Action Items

Train employees to identify and reduce their biases.

In order to tackle the effects of unconscious bias in the workplace, employers need to offer training to employees at all levels of their companies. Identifying biases will allow employees to recalibrate not only how they perceive each other, but also how they interact with one another.

When managers and human resources employees receive training to identify and reduce their biases, companies benefit directly and indirectly. During unbiased hiring and promotion processes, talented women and minorities are given fair opportunities that they would not get otherwise. Diversity in gender, race, and culture is key to an innovative and successful workforce.¹⁶

“So many of us walk in a world, behave in a world, in a completely unconscious manner. We’re not even conscious of the biases and socialization that we’ve been fed generation after generation. We’ve all been raised in a patriarchal society, in a dominator society, where power, dominance, control, and hierarchy are all valued at the expense of empathy, care, and collaboration.”

– Jennifer Siebel Newsom, CEO and Founder, The Representation Project

Implement clear and structured criteria for hiring and evaluations.

Studies have shown that when applying for jobs women tend to be penalized for having children, while men get rewarded for being fathers.¹⁷ To avoid the effect of unconscious biases on hiring processes, HR and hiring teams need to develop formal criteria that potential new hires need to meet in order to be considered for positions.¹⁸

The same formal criteria strategy should be implemented during performance evaluations in addition to giving raters tools to identify their biases. It has been demonstrated that raters are inclined to feel more comfortable while rating employees of the same gender and as a result, employee evaluations can be skewed in favor of certain employees because of their gender.

Lastly, employers should evaluate existing hiring and evaluation policies. Often legacy policies are based on out-of-date best practices and have biases built in. Modernizing them can go a long way in supporting better decision making.

Enforce accountability and transparency.

Decision makers and individuals are more likely to make unbiased choices if there is the potential that they will have to explain their choices in the future. Managers’ goals should always be made clear. By ensuring that all decisions are reasonably justified and recorded, managers are held responsible for their choices.

Tools

Project Implicit Gender–Career IAT (Implicit Association Test) – It is crucial that individuals recognize the possibility of their own gender biasing, rather than exclusively considering it to be a societal issue. The Gender–Career IAT in the Social Attitudes section of Harvard University’s Project Implicit uses a brief online test to measure how closely individuals associate gender with family or career.

(<https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/selectatest.html>)

Unbiasing section of Google’s re:Work Program – Through its Unbiasing training, Google teaches all employees, including those in charge of recruitment, how their biases affect their colleagues. Google has made this tool available to all employers.

(<https://rework.withgoogle.com/subjects/unbiasing/>)

Managing Unconscious Bias – Facebook’s Managing Unconscious Bias video training program leads individuals to consider how unconscious bias can manifest itself in a variety of different forms in the workplace, from performance attribution bias to maternal bias. The platform also encourages its audience to eliminate these biases in order to create a more collaborative, cohesive, and productive workforce.

(<https://managingbias.fb.com/>)

Unconscious Bias – The Office of Diversity and Outreach (ODO) at the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF) offers a series of resources for individuals and companies to understand the science behind unconscious bias and strategies to address it. UCSF also offers presentations and trainings upon request.

(<https://diversity.ucsf.edu/resources/unconscious-bias>)

Proven Strategies for Addressing Unconscious Bias in the Workplace – This collection of diversity best practices by Cook Ross Inc., examines the effects of unconscious bias in the workplace. Additionally, this piece includes tips to combat hidden biases.

(<http://www.cookross.com/docs/UnconsciousBias.pdf>)

“If our boys are taught at an early age that they are natural born leaders and our daughters are taught to self objectify and that they’re lacking in political efficacy, what happens is that when girls enter the workforce, they maybe are lacking in confidence or self esteem and they end up being hired based on their experience. Whereas boys, who are born being told their natural born leaders, are hired based on their perceived potential. That’s kind of unfair, right?”

– Jennifer Siebel Newsom, CEO and Founder, The Representation Project

Learn More

The Representation Project’s films – In *Miss Representation*, filmmaker and advocate Jennifer Siebel Newsom sheds light on the media’s role in creating and perpetuating negative images and stereotypes of women in our society. The Representation Project’s second film, *The Mask You Live In*, explores young men’s experiences in dealing with American culture’s narrow definition of masculinity.

(<http://therepresentationproject.org/film/miss-representation/>)

(<http://therepresentationproject.org/film/the-mask-you-live-in/>)

State of the Science: Implicit Bias Review 2015 – This study by the Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity debunks many of the myths regarding implicit bias. It focuses on both gender and racial aspects of biases.

(<http://kirwaninstitute.osu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/2015-kirwan-implicit-bias.pdf>)

Fostering Innovation Through a Diverse Workforce – This Forbes study sheds light on various strategies to increase diversity in the workplace. It includes best practices case studies from global corporations.

(http://images.forbes.com/forbesinsights/StudyPDFs/Innovation_Through_Diversity.pdf)

“I describe the likability penalty as walking on a tightrope. On one side, if women assert themselves, which they need to do to be competent and effective in their roles, they’re often less liked. On the other side, if they’re friendly and likable, they’re often seen as less competent. The problem is that you need to be seen as both likable and competent to get promotions and move through the ranks. As a result, women are penalized because they walk this tightrope that men don’t walk.”

– Rachel Thomas, President, Lean In

Company Spotlight: Google, Inc.

Since its founding in 1998, Google has continually experimented with its culture and management practices. Over the years, Google has acknowledged the lack of diversity in its employee pool and has been working hard to encourage existing and new employees to identify unconscious biases and work to overcome them.

Google’s goal is to have each of its over 60,000 employees participate in a 60- to 90-minute unconscious bias training. This strategy was implemented in 2013, at a point when many tech companies were being criticized for their lack of diversity.

The instruction includes a presentation by an instructor with at least 12 hours of training. It identifies the negative consequences of unconscious biases and provides trainees with mechanisms to identify when their perception of a person is clouded by biases.

In efforts to expand the deconstruction of unconscious bias, Google hosts the re:Work project to provide tools, guides, case studies and more to showcase how the power of data and science can put people first and make work better.

3

Improving Access to Mentorship and Career Development Opportunities

Career development programs benefit employees while at the same time allowing companies to remain competitive in changing markets.¹⁹ These programs create spaces through which business are able to retain knowledge and expertise accumulated by senior employees by passing it on to junior employees. Programs designed to strengthen employees' technical and leadership skills are especially beneficial for women, because female employees often lack social capital at work, especially in workplaces where women are underrepresented.²⁰

Although career development programs help cultivate skilled talent pools, women are disproportionately left out of career advancing opportunities in their workplaces. Edward Jones director of program management Elizabeth Schehl points to lack of awareness as the main reason for lack of female participation in career development programs designed to support women.²¹ Employers' failure to communicate the programs' purpose and value hinder women's participation.

Nonetheless, women are actively engaged in career advancement strategies inside and outside of their companies. A 2011 Catalyst study found that 26% of women

focus their energy on potential career advancement opportunities compared to 25% of men. However, men report receiving greater advancement payoffs; 21% of men advanced to senior and CEO roles while only 11% of women achieved the same levels of advancement.²²



Female employees often lack access to mentors because there are few women in senior roles to serve as mentors, and men are less likely to mentor young women. According to Catalyst, only 30% of male mentors are mentoring women, while 73% of female mentors are providing development support to other women.

Mentorship opportunities give entry level and junior employees access to support and feedback from more experienced employees. Employees benefit from same gender and cross gender mentorship. However, female employees often lack access to mentors because there are few women in senior roles to serve as mentors, and men are less likely to mentor young women. According to research by Catalyst, only 30% of male mentors are mentoring women, while 73% of female mentors are providing developmental support to other women.²³ Consequently, men have more mentorship opportunities available from senior employees than do women.

While employees who have mentors receive significant benefits, employees who have sponsors are more successful at getting ahead professionally. Sponsors allow protégés to actively participate and learn from hands-on experiences such as meetings, projects, and presentations. Having sponsors is especially important for the career development of junior level women who can benefit from the influence of a high level professional who can give them access to powerful networks.²⁴

“With gender equity a priority, many organizations are looking to career development as an important tool to address the imbalances of salary and advancement between men and women. Companies should want to create an environment where everyone has the same access to development opportunities, where there is transparency around pay, and where all are supported and encouraged to progress in their careers.”

– Annamarie Lang, SVP, Employee Engagement, Lee Hecht Harrison

Strategic Action Items

Create career development programs that cultivate and advance employees’ skills.

Career development programs are a key strategy that translates into a company investment to ensure the development of a talented employee pool. Encourage women to take advantage of these programs by spotlighting skills that will help them succeed professionally.

Connect junior employees with senior employees through mentorship programs while offering training and support for mentors.

Encourage mentors to provide career advice and support, and encourage sponsors to allow their protégés to actively participate and learn from hands-on experiences. Employees benefit from being exposed to new experiences and skills early in their careers.

Senior employees willing to become sponsors and mentors can benefit from training programs that help them identify the best mechanisms to use in helping junior employees. Encourage male and female mentors to reach out to junior female employees at the same rate as male employees. The most important part about these programs is establishing trusting and honest professional relationships. Identifying the needs and goals of the employee being mentored is essential for success.

Encourage women to take advantage of career development programs and opportunities that are aligned with their career goals.

Not all companies have the financial capacity to offer career development programs for their employees, but there are many external opportunities that professionals

can take advantage of. Employers can connect employees with organizations that offer courses and seminars to develop employees' skills and expertise.

Additionally, employers should encourage employees to network outside of their companies in order to establish connections with senior level professionals to cultivate mentorship or sponsorship relationships. Many networking opportunities arise out of informal events. Creating inclusive spaces in which employees can expand their networks can help women who often don't get opportunities to connect with senior level professionals in informal settings.

Encourage men to mentor and sponsor women.

Catalyst has calculated that in 2015, men make up 80.1% of board members and 73.1% of directors of S&P 500 companies. These high performing men have demonstrated that they have the expertise and knowledge about how to rise through the ranks to become leaders within their companies. However, when it comes to mentoring and sponsoring junior level women, senior level men shy away. Unfortunately, men often feel that engaging in the activities recommended for successful mentorship relationships puts them in danger of being perceived as developing inappropriate relationships with women. As a result, junior level women are not exposed to the same career development opportunities as men.²⁵

Having open discussions and developing programs encouraging men to be open to establishing mentorship and sponsorship relationships with women can help to allay fears. Additionally, giving men the tools and knowledge about what is appropriate for mentorships and sponsorships can alleviate pressure that might constrain how involved they get in their protégé's professional lives.

"I would say that developing women as leaders has to happen every day. A program is great, but at the end of the day, it needs to happen every day in our offices. Examples of this include invitations to sit in on client or business development meetings, being invited to join a board and more. It's about exposure. . . providing it early and often in their careers."

– Beth Baldwin, Chief People Officer, Burr Pilger Mayer

Tools

[WomenEvolution.com](https://womenevolution.com) – Women Evolution connects women to top female executives using an online mentorship platform, driving women to develop strong leadership skills and maximize their careers.

(<https://womenevolution.com/lessons/>)

[WOMEN-Unlimited.com](http://www.women-unlimited.com) – WOMEN Unlimited is an all-encompassing female leadership program that provides corporations with strategic resources to support promising female employees through career development programs that connect early-career women to rising women leaders and senior level women executives. Focusing on mentoring, education, and networking, this unique program promotes long-term economic success for both female participants and their companies.

(<http://www.women-unlimited.com/home/>)

[How to Be a Role Model For Girls](http://leanin.org/tips/role-model) – Girls and young women will be part of the next generation of leaders. This Lean In guide addresses the tactics that the women in their lives can use to instill the skills girls will need to lead.

(<http://leanin.org/tips/role-model>)

Sponsoring Women to Success – This Catalyst report discusses the importance of sponsors and their positive effects on women’s career advancement and explains how sponsoring is different from mentoring. It also sheds light on the direct and indirect benefits sponsorship has for organizations.

(<http://www.catalyst.org/knowledge/sponsoring-women-success>)

Learn More

4 Things All Mentors and Mentees Should Know – Lean In offers a list of tips for mentors and mentees at any stage of their careers. The list explains that as trust builds over time, mentors can develop into sponsors who actively advocate and open doors for their protégés.

(<http://leanin.org/tips/mentorship>)

How To Be a Workplace MVP – In this series of tips, Lean In identifies men as key advocates for women in the workplace. The tips propose ways in which men can change how they perceive women and how they interact with them in the workplace.

(<http://leanin.org/tips/mvp>)

Micro-Sponsorship: A Tool to Combat Micro-Inequities

– In this piece published on LinkedIn, Lori Nishiura Mackenzie, Executive Director at the Clayman Institute for Gender Research at Stanford University, proposes strategies to address and reduce the everyday inequalities women face at work.

(<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/micro-sponsorship-tool-combat-micro-inequities-nishiura-mackenzie>)

The Answer to Women’s Advancement: Male Sponsors –

In this Forbes contributor post, Gabrielle Rapke Hoffman discusses the importance of male sponsorship for women while emphasizing how the heightened impact of sponsoring goes beyond just mentoring.

(<http://www.forbes.com/sites/85broads/2013/07/25/the-answer-to-womens-advancement-male-sponsors/#71eef93f7318>)

Company Spotlight: Intel Corp.

Headquartered in Santa Clara, California, Intel Corporation is a technology company with over 100,000 employees globally. In 2014, Intel set out to be the first high technology company to fully represent women and minorities in their US workforce by 2020.²⁶ Intel increased its hiring of women in the first two years of the initiative, and by the end of 2015 women made up 24% of Intel’s workforce, a 5.4% increase since 2014.

Because of its increasing female workforce, Intel established its Women at Intel Network program, a strategic employee resource group with chapters located at Intel’s major US and international sites. Its goal is to provide networking, leadership, and development opportunities to its members and to help women at Intel develop and advance their careers both technically and professionally. Chapters host annual leadership and development conferences and deliver monthly events focused on topics such as career development, mentoring, communication, and leadership.

The Women at Intel Network program is also dedicated to attracting, connecting, inspiring, and advancing women at Intel by delivering programs that foster their development and retention, and by leveraging the strength of Intel’s women VPs and Fellows as visible, proactive role models. The company’s overall women’s initiative is part of the Intel Global Diversity and Inclusion effort, and it drives conversations and initiatives important to women at Intel, utilizing both internal networks and external alliances to advance women in technology.

4

Establishing a Healthy Workplace Culture

Workplace culture is a mixture of companies' values, traditions, behaviors, and beliefs. It affects employee engagement and, ultimately, the bottom line. In a study of 2010–2011 data from 49 publicly traded companies, Gallup found that companies with a higher ratio of actively engaged employees (9.3 to one) experienced 147% higher earnings per share.²⁷ Ensuring that female employees work in environments where they can contribute and succeed is essential for a company's hiring and retention of talented women.

When women are excluded and underrepresented at work, they develop a feeling of "otherness." Women in male-dominated workplaces are often demoralized, as they see men being rewarded for meeting goals that women have limited ability to accomplish.²⁸ For example, networking over drinks or at golf courses tends to be an activity from which women are excluded, so they miss out on opportunities to connect with clients and advance professionally. As a result, women's turnover rates in male-dominated workplaces are greater than men's.²⁹

Building trust between female employees and their bosses is essential to fostering successful work environments. Nonetheless, women have historically distrusted their bosses more than men. According to the Center for Creative Leadership, when women believe they have

to work harder than men to achieve the same results and that they are not getting a fair share of benefits and pay, they become less trusting, especially during times of financial uncertainty. Employees who can trust their bosses are more likely to stay at their jobs.³⁰



According to the Center for Creative Leadership, when women believe they have to work harder than men to achieve the same results and that they are not getting a fair share of benefits and pay, they become less trusting, especially during times of financial uncertainty.

Strategic Action Items

Maintain transparent records and communications.

It is important for employees to feel that they can trust their bosses. When a company maintains transparent communications, employees not only understand what is expected of them, but also understand what is expected of their coworkers.

Offer rewards that can be attained by all employees.

Workers value acknowledgment of their input to the companies that employ them. Having clear and achievable goals for all employees helps keep up their morale and consequently maintains their engagement. Establishing a rewards program as an additional incentive for employees can help keep morale

Diversify your employee pool.

Having a diverse, collaborative employee pool leads to workplaces in which women and men feel comfortable participating and generating new ideas.

A diverse pool not only is beneficial for workplace culture, but also helps businesses provide services to a broader client base. Diverse employees bring a wider variety of skills and experiences that can lead to different strategies when solving problems and providing service.³¹

Encourage communication between managers and employees.

Fostering communication pathways and positive interactions between leaders and their employees is essential to demonstrating to employees that they are an important part of companies. Building positive and respectful relationships among employees at all levels fosters desirable work environments where women can recognize how their work is essential to the success of the company. Managers should always be reliable, consistent, and supportive leaders. Employees, regardless of gender, enjoy working with people whom they can count on and who demonstrate appreciation towards them.

“We have a very positive workplace culture, and Because People Matter is a key element of that culture. When people are happy, and enjoy what they are doing, they are more engaged, and a more engaged work force results in higher retention, and lower turnover. It results in better service to clients. Those two things, in turn, result in a successful organization.”

– James Wallace, CEO, Burr Pilger Mayer

Tools

[What Works for Women at Work: Four Patterns Working Women Need to Know](#) – In this Lean In series of videos, UC Hastings law professor Joan C. Williams discusses patterns of gender bias that women face in their workplaces. The videos focus on women's competence, the tightrope between being perceived as too masculine and too feminine, motherhood, and gender bias. Lean In also offers discussion questions that address the themes and ideas in the video.

(<http://leanin.org/education/what-works-for-women-at-work-part-1-prove-it-again/>)

[Redesigning, Redefining Work Videobook](#) – This videobook, created by Stanford's Center for the Advancement of Women's Leadership, presents innovative techniques to foster inclusive workplace culture. The presentations are divided into five sections which include research and additional resources.

(<https://womensleadership.stanford.edu/rwv>)

[9 Leadership Steps For Corporate Culture Change](#) – In this nine-point check list by Forbes contributor Micah Solomon, employers will find practical steps to change workplace culture in corporations.

(<http://www.forbes.com/sites/micahsolomon/2014/09/27/a-leadership-checklist-for-culture-change-and-customer-experience-excellence/>)

[Google's re:Work guide for Managers](#) – This guide set identifies four strategies to support managerial staff and help them improve workplace culture in their organizations.

(<https://rework.withgoogle.com/subjects/managers/>)

[Thinkbusinessstinkequality.org.uk](#). – Think Business, Think Equality is an online employer assessment program. Created by women's labor initiative Close the Gap, this self-assessment tool analyzes how small and medium businesses can benefit economically from stronger gender equity practices.

(<http://www.thinkbusinessstinkequality.org.uk/toolkit/>)

[Career Conversations Build Trust, Foster Engagement](#) – Lee Hecht Harrison's Kristen Leverone gives practical tips for managers on how to address daily workplace occurrences.

(<http://workplaceinsights.lhh.com/2012/04/16/career-conversations-build-trust-foster-engagement/>)

[Five Tips to Create Your Own Job Security](#) – This blog post by Helene Cavalli from Lee Hecht Harrison offers tips for employees to create job security by actively working on their professional development.

(<http://workplaceinsights.lhh.com/2014/08/28/five-tips-to-create-your-own-job-security/>)

"Women bring a lot of value to the table. They bring a diversity of thought. We're going to ask a bunch of questions about opening up a new market, launching a new product, being able to sell our products and services through a different portal, so forth. That difference of how we view things is really important."

– Rayona Sharpnack, Founder and CEO, Institute for Women's Leadership, Institute for Gender Partnership

Learn More

[Culture: Your Environment for People at Work](#)

– This article by human resources expert Susan M. Heathfield explains what workplace culture is and how it affects employees.

(<http://humanresources.about.com/od/organizationalculture/a/culture.htm>)

[How to Boost Employee Engagement with an Effective Rewards Program](#)

– Salesforce’s Russ Fradin describes strategies to encourage employees through the implementation of effective rewards programs.

(<https://www.salesforce.com/blog/2014/10/how-boost-employee-engagement-with-effective-rewards-program-gp.html>)

Company Spotlight: PwC

PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP (PwC)’s global workforce is approximately 50% female and with the increasing number of women entering the workforce, PwC began examining the way women think about, see and approach their personal and career lives at different professional stages. Since then, the organization published a series of reports, the latest of those being *The Female Millennial: A New Era of Talent* (2015) and *Modern Mobility: Moving Women with Purpose* (2016). These reports not only examine changes in the workforce, but capture differences in perspectives among men and women that organizations need to be aware of as they strengthen their commitment to gender equity.

As part of a workplace culture that embraces diversity and inclusion, PwC developed an initiative with the goal of engaging both men and women in the discussion of gender. In addition to promoting women’s inclusion networks, which were predominately attended by females, PwC sought out to engage in discussions with men and women in these networks and in other venues where conversations can take place. Recognizing the importance of leadership engagement, PwC began

with setting the “tone at the top”. Beginning in 2013, their first approach was to engage male leaders in an active dialog. PwC’s then U.S. Chairman, Bob Moritz, met with Facebook’s Sheryl Sandberg to discuss her book *Lean In* and how companies can take action to support the advancement of women as a part of a series of discussions called PwC Talks. Additionally, PwC launched a series of global discussions entitled “Aspire to Lead” for women attending college to begin to think about some of the tools included in Sheryl Sandberg’s book, *Lean In for Graduates*, earlier in their careers.

To foster gender equity in the workplace, the organization has implemented policies to support its female and male employees. PwC offers full paid parental leave which includes up to six consecutive weeks for men, which encourages men to take time off to support their families. To further support their staff who are out on leave for extended periods of time, PwC’s “Opt Out” policy, allows men and women who are returning to work to elect the option of “opting out” of the performance year review assessment which provides time for them to get adjusted to their daily work lives.



5

Offering HR Policies Beneficial for All

Progressive HR (human resources) policies and a culture that supports them are important inputs to developing healthy, happy, and equitable workplaces. Well-supported employees are more productive, and businesses do better in the long run. Unfortunately, many organizations in the United States have HR policies that prevent women and minorities from reaching their full potential. Increasing flexible work arrangements, offering paid parental leave, and even providing subsidized childcare are practical steps that can help all employees—and the businesses they work at—succeed.

According to Sheryl Sandberg's Lean In, 43% of highly qualified women leave their jobs permanently or for extended periods of time to raise their children, while another 25% of women return to work two weeks after giving birth, driven by fear of not being able to provide financially for their families.³² Neither of these situations is optimal by any measure. By not offering longer and flexible parental leave policies, employers often lose valuable employees who need more time to spend with their families, or they end up with employees who are distracted due to stress over having to return to work too early.

The United States is the only developed nation that does not require employers to offer paid parental leave to their employees.³³ According to the US Department of Labor, only 12% of private sector employees in the United States are offered paid parental leave through their employers. Only 5% of those receiving paid parental leave are among the lowest wage earners (bottom 25%), while 22% are among the highest wage earners.³⁴ This situation persists despite significant evidence that offering generous paid leave is beneficial for the economy. An estimate by the Department of Labor found that if women between 25 and 54 participated in the US labor force at the same rates that they participate in the labor forces of Canada and Germany—both countries which offer longer paid leave options for employees than the US—the US would benefit from an additional \$500 billion of economic activity per year.³⁵ Examples at individual organizations also suggest that generous paid leave policies help retain talent. When Google extended its parental leave policy, the rate at which new mothers quit dropped by 50%.³⁶

“Extended paid parental leave engenders a lot of loyalty. People want to be able to manage both, their professional lives and their family lives. I think San Francisco’s paid parental leave ordinance is a good start and I’d like to see it be even longer in the future.”

– Emily Murase, Executive Director, San Francisco Department on the Status of Women

Men, like women, report that they would like to be able to spend more time with their newborns and families, however fear of financial instability—and often workplace culture—prevent them from using leave even when it is offered. The US Department of Labor 2012 Family and Medical Leave Act survey found that 70% of men who take parental leave return to work after less than ten days, despite evidence that their families benefit from their engagement in early child rearing.³⁷ Improving HR policies to address these situations benefits women, men, and the bottom line.



Strategic Action Items

Establish HR policies that are mindful of female and male employees' responsibilities at work and outside of work.

Employees and workplaces succeed when employees' schedules work for them. Allowing employees to work remotely when possible and giving them flexible work schedules helps them take care of all the things they need to outside of work, while being able to focus on meeting due dates and completing tasks at work.

BPM (Burr Pilger Mayer)—which was named by Financial Women's Alliance and the American Women's Society of CPAs as one of the Best CPA Firms for Women in both 2015 and 2016—implemented its BPM Flex program in 2015. The program shifted the company's past 8-hour work day policy to one which allows employees to determine their hours while being accountable for their projects. The firm reports that the program has positively affected the company's employee retention.

Programs like BPM Flex acknowledge employees' needs to balance their work lives and their responsibilities outside of work. Flexible schedules are especially beneficial for women who spend 67% more time doing unpaid work at home than men, according to findings by the US Bureau of Labor Statistics.³⁸

For instance, allowing employees to leave their offices at 3:00 pm to pick up their children from school and then to resume working from home helps them to keep a balance between work and parental responsibilities. Alternatively, employees can go to work earlier in order to complete 8 hours of work earlier in the day.

Extend the allowed paid parental leave periods.

Families experience great benefits from extended paid parental leave policies. According to research data analyzed by Demos senior fellow Sharon Lerner, children whose parents are able to care for them for at least

12 weeks after birth are less likely to experience early childhood death. However, the decrease in chances of early childhood death is even more pronounced when parents are able to spend up to 40 weeks after birth with their children.³⁹

During the period of leave, new mothers are able to heal their bodies and both parents are able to bond with their newborns. Despite these benefits, both women and men find themselves forced to go back to work prematurely in order to provide financial support for their families.⁴⁰ Paid parental leave is key not only to ensuring that new families are able to sustain themselves during a time in which their expenses are rising, but also to allowing them to enjoy their new families without worry and stress.

Companies need to support their employees and their new families by extending their paid parental leave policies. Offering full pay in addition to that mandated by legislation makes a significant difference in the lives of new parents. Additionally, changing workplace culture in order to encourage men to take time off to spend with their new families is an impactful way to support them.

Offer subsidized child care to parents.

New parents, especially mothers, are often faced with the predicament of choosing between having to work and having to take care of their children. For many women who are the caregivers in their families, the decision to leave the workforce becomes the only solution to the problem of finding quality child care.

Many working parents struggle not only with the question of who can take care of children, but also with the question of how they will afford child care. According to a 2015 report by Child Care Aware America, the average annual cost of full-time child care in California is \$7,565; however, costs range between \$2,649 and \$11,817 depending on children's ages.⁴¹

Child care for infants and children less than 4 years of age is the most expensive for families who do not qualify for state child care subsidy programs. As a result, parents see much of their income being used for the care of their children.

Companies can support their employees by offering subsidized child care or by creating child care centers on site if there is space available. These measures support families and benefit companies, as they see less turnover, absenteeism, and tardiness from their employees.

"Our feeling is as long as the work is performed and the client is happy, that we are more than willing to provide flexibility. We implemented a program last year called BPM Flex. In the past, an employee had to record 8 hours of billable time a day. What we changed is, instead of recording 8 hours daily, employees can spread their work throughout the week. This allows them time to incorporate health and fitness, hobbies and soccer games (to name a few) into their week. In a nutshell we said 'We trust you. You're a professional, you have your budgeted hours, make it work.'"

- Beth Baldwin, Chief People Officer, Burr Pilger Mayer

Tools

TED Talk: Settle Down, Pay Attention, Say Thank You: A How-To – In this TED Talk featured by Lean In, neuroscientist Dr. Kristen Race shares tips to help women balance work and life. Lean In also offers discussion questions that address the themes and ideas in the video.

(<http://leanin.org/education/ted-talk-settle-down-pay-attention-say-thank-you-a-how-to/>)

Assess Your Workplace – The Gender Equality Principles Initiative—a public-private collaborative formed by the San Francisco Department on the Status of Women, Calvert, and Verité—provides this platform for

companies to input employment data and company policies in order to assess workplace strengths and weaknesses in gender equality. This platform also is useful in calculating multiple assessments and has the capability to track company progress over time.

(<http://genderprinciples.org/assessment.php>)

Planning for Work/Life Balance – In this Lean In video, Sharon Meers and Joanna Strober, the co-authors of *Getting to 50/50: How Working Parents Can Have It All*, discuss strategies to achieve work/life balance. The video features the examination of real-life scenarios as described by women.

(<http://leanin.org/education/planning-for-worklife-balance/>)

An Overview of Child Care Options for Employers – This piece by the CAPSLO Child Care Resource Connection gives an overview of the benefits of various childcare options for employers and employees.

(http://www.capslo.org/images/pdf/ccrc/employer_sponsored_child_care.pdf)

Child Care Assistance: Helping Parents Work and Children Succeed – This brief by Hannah Matthews and Christina Walker from the Center for Law and Social Policy discusses the importance of child care assistance for low income families.

(<http://www.clasp.org/resources-and-publications/child-care-assistance>)

Company Spotlight: Netflix

Netflix was established in 1998, and the streaming media service it initiated in 2007 currently reaches audiences worldwide. In August 2015, the company expanded its parental leave policy and now allows women and men working at Netflix to take unlimited parental leave during the first year after the birth of a child.

This move by Netflix is revolutionary, because the company promises to continue paying employees—male and female—their full salaries while they are on leave.

In order to accommodate such an important period in employees' lives, while still allowing them to perform and to meet their career goals, Netflix also allows employees returning from leave to decide whether they want to work full time or part time. Managers and team leaders work with employees to establish schedules to ensure that deadlines are met and projects are completed.



6

Advancing Women as Leaders

The Pew Research Center found that in 2014 only 26 of the Fortune 500 companies had a woman serving as CEO.⁴² According to Catalyst, at the board of directors level, women held 19.2% of all S&P 500 board seats in the United States during 2014.⁴³ Women are too often finding top level positions within companies to be unobtainable, a result of limited career development opportunities and a bias toward promoting men more than women.⁴⁴ Women of color face even more challenges in attaining leadership roles. A 2015 Catalyst report found that women of color fill only 2.8% of director roles in Fortune 500 companies.⁴⁵

Companies with diverse leadership have been found to outperform those that do not. A UC Davis Graduate School of Management study of California's 400 largest public companies measured by market capitalization found that the 25 companies with the highest percentage of women in leadership (based on the proportion of women among board directors and executives) have higher returns on equity than the overall average.⁴⁶

Even with the demonstrated relationship between balanced gender representation in leadership and corporate returns, women remain underrepresented at every level of the corporate talent pipeline. Women are more likely to hold staff jobs (positions in support services, such as legal, human resources, and IT) as opposed to positions related to core operations, making women less likely to eventually be promoted to C-suite

roles. Additionally, the path to leadership is more difficult for women; the Women in the Workplace study undertaken by LeanIn.Org and McKinsey & Company found that women are 15% less likely to be promoted compared to men.⁴⁷

Despite this, women's desires to reach senior positions in their organizations are close to those of men. For instance, an Oliver Wyman survey of 800 financial services professionals in 12 countries found that 58% of women in the financial services want to reach senior positions in their organizations, compared to 59% of men.⁴⁸

Millennial women are a key part of the workforce now and in the future. They are earning degrees and entering the workforce at higher rates than ever before, and they are more confident and expect to be treated equally in the workplace.⁴⁹ A 2015 PwC online survey of 10,105 respondents across 75 countries found that 85% of millennial women care about their employers' diversity and inclusion efforts. Nonetheless, 71% of them believe that opportunities are not offered equally to all.⁵⁰

Admittedly, women's increased participation in the workforce is a result of the implementation of legislation that has prevented discrimination against them.⁵¹ Nevertheless, as millennial women enter the workforce, they find their expectations unmet. They see the effects of gender biases, as women are still unable to break the glass ceiling keeping them from top positions.

Strategic Action Items

Track metrics to develop enhanced understanding of gender equity in leadership and across the organization.

According to the Women in the Workplace study undertaken by LeanIn.Org and McKinsey & Company, only 40% of companies hold managers accountable for performance on gender equity metrics.⁵² Tracking the progress of internal gender equity efforts helps companies understand what strategies work and what measurable impact they've had.

Creating structures and strategies to track those metrics provides a first step in creating greater gender equity across an organization. Performance indicators might include analyzing gender balance at stages of the hiring process, promotion rates across genders based on role, and the attrition rate of women as compared to men.



Women are 15% less likely to be promoted than men.

Companies that have diverse leadership have been found to outperform those that do not. Nonetheless, in 2014 women held 19.2% of all S&P 500 board seats in the US. Women are too often finding top-level positions within companies to be unobtainable, a result of limited career development opportunities and a bias toward promoting men more than women.

Create programs and spaces to ensure that women get an opportunity to cultivate leadership skills.

To break down barriers to women's achievement of leadership roles, companies should invest in initiatives that support women and their inclusion. These programs can target and build specific skills that will help women advance to higher-level positions. Networking events and group lunches can also create more opportunities for interaction between women and men, which can lead to stronger professional relationships that have the potential to advance their careers.

It is important to note, however, that many talented women already have the skills they need to succeed in leadership roles, but they may lack the confidence they need to shine on their path to those roles. Despite earning more college and graduate degrees than men, women tend to be less confident in their accomplishments and therefore tend to feel unsure about their input.⁵³ This is even more true for spaces in which women are underrepresented. Men also experience these types of uncertainty, but on a smaller scale. To help women overcome confidence barriers, employers and male coworkers need to become allies of women by supporting and acknowledging their input on a day-to-day basis.

"In the absence of senior female leaders, young women are prone to say to themselves, "I don't believe I can get there, because I don't see any role models who have gotten there." That can be a big influencer in their decision to opt out."

– Marisa Drew, Managing Director, Co-Head EMEA Investment, Banking and Capital Markets, Credit Suisse as quoted in Oliver Wyman's Women in Financial Services 2016 report.⁵⁴

CEOs must actively engage their companies in diversity strategies to increase the number of women on boards.

High-performing women add insight and value to company boards as they bring new perspectives and ideas with them. In September 2013, the California state legislature passed Senate Concurrent Resolution 62 (SCR-62), which encourages companies to increase the number of women on their boards to the resolution's suggested minimums between January 2014 and December 2016.

SCR-62's goals for the number of women on companies' boards depend on the company's size: three or more women for boards of nine or more directors, two or more women for boards of five to eight directors, and one woman for smaller boards. According to the 2015–2016 UC Davis Graduate School of Management study on women directors, only 70 (17.5%) of California's 400 largest public companies meet SCR-62's goals as of 2015, and the study concluded that companies are unlikely to meet the resolution's goals by the end of 2016.⁵⁵

In order to effectively create diverse boards, CEOs need to actively involve themselves in the development and implementation of diversity efforts. Because of the power of their positions, CEOs are ultimately responsible for establishing clear goals for their companies' selection of women board members.

Expand beyond traditional networks to select board members.

Board members are usually elected from the networks built by companies, ultimately limiting the pool from which new directors are selected. Reaching out to talented and insightful individuals outside of companies' immediate networks generates diverse and inclusive board compositions. Existing board members, both men and women, should also champion gender equity and inclusion when filling high-ranking positions.

A 2015 Equilar study found that 24.4% of women directors occupied multiple board seats, compared to 19% of male board members.⁵⁶ While this appears to be a sign of progress because women are having more influence on multiple companies by holding board seats, it is also a problem for women who wish to occupy a seat on a board of directors but cannot because of the lack of available seats. Giving board seats to women who are not sitting on multiple boards or who have not previously been directors is key to increasing the overall amount of female board members.

Electing female board members from beyond companies' networks is also key to increasing the overall number of women directors. A 2016 study from Equilar and the US 30% Club found that 78.5% of women with executive experience at US public companies have yet to sit on a board.⁵⁷ There is plenty of talent to choose from.

Tools

TED Talk: "Why We Have Too Few Women Leaders"

– In this video featured on Lean In, Sheryl Sandberg discusses why women reach top level positions at slower rates than men. Lean In offers discussion questions that address the themes and ideas in the video.

(<http://leanin.org/education/ted-talk-why-we-have-too-few-women-leaders/>)

Tips For Managers – Lean In offers a series of tips for managers on closing the gender leadership gaps in their organizations. The list presents scenarios women often find themselves in and offers solutions for managers.

(<http://leanin.org/tips/managers>)

Center for the Advancement of Women's Leadership

– Stanford University's Center for the Advancement of Women's Leadership conducts research and develops tools for employers and employees to identify and address the inequalities women face daily as they establish themselves as leaders in the workplace.

(<https://womensleadership.stanford.edu/>)

Equilar BoardEdge – To help in building a high-performing board, this board assessment tool evaluates the composition of boards and assesses each board member's background.

(<http://www.equilar.com/boardedge.html>)

Learn More

Women in Financial Services 2016 – This report, by a team of Oliver Wyman's researchers, reveals the status of women in financial services. The report includes key strategies to address the inequalities women face in the workplace.

(<http://www.oliverwyman.com/content/oliver-wyman/global/en/insights/publications/2016/jun/Women-in-Financial-Services-2016.html#.V5ara6KzmS5>)

Women in the Boardroom: A Global Perspective – This Deloitte report presents a global analysis of the efforts of 49 countries to increase the number of women occupying board seats.

(<http://www2.deloitte.com/women-in-the-boardroom>)

"We should stop asking the question of how much value women bring to a company. To ensure we make long-term progress toward gender equality, we need to stop focusing on the wrong issue. At some point, we should re-frame and ask, 'Why have women been excluded in the first place? And what should we do now to fix it?' We will solve the corporate gender equality problem sooner when companies make a greater effort to recruit women."

– Olga V. Mack, General Counsel, ClearSlide

Company Spotlight: Deloitte

Deloitte has a rich history of leading the way with their commitment to inclusion. The journey formally began more than 25 years ago when Deloitte became the first professional services organization to establish a women's initiative. As a result of its commitment, the organization has experienced outstanding outcomes: in 2015, Deloitte became the first of the "Big Four" accounting firms (Deloitte, Ernst & Young, PwC and KPMG) to elect a female CEO. This wasn't the only time Deloitte led the way: it was also the first of the Big Four to elect a minority CEO, a minority chairman, and a female chairman.

Deloitte's innovative thinking has landed the organization on a number of best-places-to-work lists, including DiversityInc's Top 50 Companies for Diversity, Working Mother's 100 Best Companies and Best Companies for Working Mothers, the Human Rights Campaign's Best Places to Work for LGBT Equality, Civilian Jobs' Most Valuable Employer for Military, and Fortune's 100 Best Companies to Work For.

Through its continuous evolution, the organization has embarked on a new phase of its inclusion journey. Some of what were traditionally viewed as women's issues are no longer issues of concern to just women. This is why Deloitte's inclusive culture today takes a more holistic view of the workforce and fosters an environment where everyone can be themselves at work.

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